

AGENDA SUMMARY PAGE
CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF: JANUARY 7, 2009

DEPARTMENT: GOVERNMENT & COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

DIRECTOR: TED J. OLIVAS

☐ Consent ☒ Discussion

SUBJECT:

ADMINISTRATIVE:

Report on the proposed repository for high-level nuclear waste at Yucca Mountain from Irene Navis, Clark County's Nuclear Waste Planning Manager, and Sheila Conway, with Urban Environmental Research

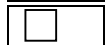
Fiscal Impact



No Impact



Augmentation Required



Budget Funds Available

Amount:

Funding Source:

Dept./Division:

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND:

On June 3, 2008, the Department of Energy (DOE) filed a license with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to construct a repository for high-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel at Yucca Mountain in Nye County, Nevada. Irene Navis, Clark County's Nuclear Waste Planning Manager, will be giving an update regarding that application process. Additionally, she will be discussing the contentions that Clark County filed with the NRC challenging the DOE's capacity to construct and operate a safe repository.

RECOMMENDATION:

Report only. No action required.

BACKUP DOCUMENTATION:

1. Agenda Memo
2. Submitted at Meeting – Brochure on Clark County Monitoring Program Q3 2008

Minutes:

No motion required. A report was given.

IRENE NAVIS, Clark County Department of Comprehensive Planning, Nuclear Waste Division, and DR. SHEILA CONWAY, Urban Environmental Research, gave a brief update on the Yucca Mountain Project. MS. NAVIS noted that the City and Clark County have a long history of cooperative efforts on the Yucca Mountain Project.

Regarding the Department of Energy's (DOE) license application, MS. NAVIS stated that the application was currently before the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). She pointed out that Clark County has the authority to participate in the licensing program and had filed a

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petition to intervene on the DOE'S application. The petition contained 15 contentions which raised serious technical, scientific and procedural questions and deficiencies in the DOE'S application. The contentions related primarily to safety and environmental aspects of the DOE'S proposal for a nuclear waste repository, as well as social and economic impacts.

MS. NAVIS commented that Clark County has serious doubts as to the eligibility of the DOE as a licensee, noting its well-documented history of failures to meet procedural, contractual and legal obligations. Clark County has no confidence that the DOE has the ability to safely and securely construct and operate the proposed repository.

As to the schedule for the evidentiary process and related hearings, the calendar was contingent upon adequate funding for the DOE and NRC. She assured the Mayor and Council that Clark County would work diligently to make its case against the proposed repository.

MS. NAVIS acknowledged that PRESIDENT-ELECT OBAMA did not support the Yucca Mountain project as proposed and the State's federal delegation was working with him on this issue. The City and the County have to move forward as if nothing is going to change due to the upcoming application deadlines. She stated that Clark County would continue to actively participate in the process until the application was withdrawn. She noted that PRESIDENT OBAMA and the State's federal delegation would have to weigh the risks of halting the project, given the already existing financial liabilities to the nuclear utilities due to the non-opening of the project in 1998.

DR. CONWAY thanked the City for its continued support and participation in the Community Indicators Monitoring Program. The information provided by the City had considerably contributed to the contentions against the Yucca Mountain project. The project would probably see a significant funding cut to the project, but she acknowledged that the project was not yet halted.

Regarding the Surface Transportation Board (STB), MS. NAVIS stated that the County had not heard that the Commission has made a final decision. There was no timeframe for a decision and the County was still in the process of answering questions put forward by the Commission. However, the formal record was closed and an answer is expected later in 2009, after the change in administration.

MAYOR GOODMAN expressed his hope that the STB would make positive findings and MS. NAVIS stated that the STB tends to place significant conditions and requirements upon the DOE to ensure key environment and regulatory elements remain in place. MAYOR GOODMAN thanked MS. NAVIS and DR. CONWAY for their report.